



**The Object as Subject: The Role of Museums and Material Culture
Collections in American Studies**

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THE OBJECT AS SUBJECT: THE ROLE OF MUSEUMS AND MATERIAL CULTURE COLLECTIONS IN AMERICAN STUDIES

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"We have been so preoccupied with words that we have neglected things . . ."¹

I. UNIVERSITIES AND MUSEUMS: THE POSSIBILITIES

AMONG POTENTIAL EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO TEACHERS AND students of American Studies, one important resource has been largely neglected. The museum, as a repository of cultural artifacts—objects and documents—remains for the most part a rich untapped lode of valuable learning experiences in American culture. With only a little willingness to experiment and some freedom of imagination, the university and museum can form a cooperative relationship that will enhance the educational effectiveness of both institutions, while it opens to students the discovery of new dimensions in their understanding of American art, history, economics and cultural life.

Objects, in combination with written documentation, can help us to explore the why of history, can help us to move beyond simply the what and how. Those objects housed in small, local museums generally belong to

¹John A. Kouwenhoven, "American Studies: Words or Things," *American Studies in Transition*, Marshall Fishwick, ed. (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1964), p. 16.

people who did not leave neat written records of their passage on earth. The material objects they left behind are often our best clues for understanding how they led their lives. Such objects may help us to de-mythologize the past, to give us a clearer understanding of the rigors and demands of an earlier way of life; they certainly provide a complement to traditional ways of looking at the past.

For the past two years the National American Studies Faculty's Community Museum Program (under the direction of John A. Hague), which is funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, has had as its goal to provide small museums and historical societies with fresh ideas for use and development of their resources. The program's primary concern is with museums in communities of ten to one hundred thousand people which usually operate with moderate funding and limited staff. This program was developed upon the conviction that people with American Studies backgrounds (including history, archaeology, media work and folklife) could bring a new perspective to the community museum. The operating premise has been that it is incumbent upon museums, as collectors, preservers and interpreters of the cultural and material past, to make this past available to increasing numbers of individuals, both young and old, who are searching for personal and social identity. The museum was viewed as another educational tool, the artifact as another document of historical interpretation.

One aspect of the Community Museum Program has been to stimulate more productive exchange between American Studies teachers and scholars and the museums, and it is with this part of the program that we are especially concerned here. The four full-time fellows and special consultants drawn from the NASF volunteers have helped to design new interpretative and educational programs based on the concept that the past has relevance to the present. They bring sources of professional exhibit and conservation information to the attention of museum personnel. They have, in sum, tried to help more than sixty community museums and historical societies to become more vital educational and cultural activity centers for their communities.

In the course of this effort, one thing has become increasingly clear. The community museum, with the help of creative planning by educators and museum personnel, can be the focus of some very rewarding learning experiences for students. The instructor, of course, must be willing to view the museum as something other than merely an interesting diversion from classroom routine. A strong commitment to the development of new non-traditional approaches to the study of American history and culture is essential. As interesting as such random exposure to museums may be, it generally does not begin to involve students actively in the stuff and substance of the museum's collection. Nor do such encounters give students the opportunity to integrate conceptually their more traditional classroom

and research activities with hands-on study of the objects and artifacts that are the signatures of civilization—signatures of those who, ironically, were never concerned with writing their own history. Unlike other institutions, the museum has material objects with which to educate the present generation. The museum has the “real” object which gives a three-dimensional clue to present and past reality.

II. LOCATING AND MAKING CONTACT WITH MUSEUMS IN YOUR AREA

Once faculty and students have decided that it is important to work with artifacts included in the collections of neighboring museums, just how should they go about it; how should they get outside the walls of the college and start talking to the local agencies? Nearly every college or university is located near at least one museum. More often than not, the museum will be of the type already described: small, understaffed, with a generalized collection. These problems are related to both an historic failure to recognize the museum as an educational institution and underfinancing.

The economic reality of museum administration has made the museum traditionally dependent upon the monies of rich and not-so-rich benefactors—the so-called “museum angels.” Only recently have federal monies become available via the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities to supplement private and local government revenues. Even so, the overwhelming majority of museums (e.g., run by historical societies) “operate on the knife edge of starvation.”² Consequently, most museums have had a limited number of personnel without adequate training. Moreover, collections have not, as a rule, been built up in any systematic manner and generally lack sufficient documentation.

Instructors wishing to work with museums must be fully acquainted with both the museum staff and the collection, an obvious point, but unfortunately one that is frequently overlooked. Although schools and museums are both institutions of learning, they have historically had all too little to say to one another. Academics have sometimes been indifferent to the collections and resources of local museums. Admittedly, museum personnel have tended to place primary emphasis on the preservation of the objects in their care, forgetting that these objects must tell a story, must be used, before their worth can really be understood. They are obligated to have that protective attitude; they must provide security; they must provide physical safety for the objects entrusted to their care. Most scholars are sympathetic to the precautions and safeguards surrounding the use of old

²Louis L. Tucker, “Hardy Historical Societies,” *New York Times*, Mar. 10, 1974, Sec. 4, p. 16.

manuscripts, letters and other library materials. However, they often fail to realize that artifacts are likewise fragile, often irreplaceable and deserving of careful use. It is easy then to understand the apprehensions of museum personnel who are faced with a professor who comes sweeping in and says: "I'd like to set up a workshop . . . I want the kids to touch the objects, to work with them . . . to really get a feel of what it's like to hold that butter-mold." Often the university people do not understand what a museum is about, what the basic museum techniques are, and most important, what they want their students to do.

It is equally important that the instructor be familiar with the contents of the museum collection. Every museum, just like every community, is unique. Adaptability and originality in museum-oriented projects are not only possible, but inevitable. One museum with which we worked, located in a city that had been a major transportation center, had an outstanding collection of historic vehicles. A possible approach for a major interpretative exhibit which the museum is considering is the history of the community as affected by the history of transportation. Another museum, which doesn't own a single wagon or car, does have an extensive collection of 19th century children's toys. The director has considered a theme of "Nineteenth Century Attitudes Toward Childhood" as suggested by artifacts of recreation. Material culture provides one of the richest opportunities for applying the multidisciplinary methodologies that are the cornerstone of American Studies. Material culture research should be a creative endeavor given as much to intuitive analysis as to quantification and mere description. Students must do more than simply view an object—they could do as well looking at an illustration.* They need to make some extremely sophisticated analogies and generalizations as they relate that plow to human toil, that toy to a child's role in a Victorian home, that restraining bed to views of mental illness and its treatment.

The challenges and difficulties that are a feature of almost every small museum should not cause university personnel to patronize, and otherwise hold in contempt, those who staff small community museums. In most cases it is the small historical society museum which alone preserves what remains of the nation's tangible past. Louis Tucker, state historian of New York, has paid the small historical society this homage: "Without much fuss, they perform a myriad of good works, from saving quaint old railroad depots and priceless historical documents to developing local history programs for schools."³ In approaching a museum the university should be

*We realize of course that historic photographs and illustrations are important primary sources. What we are suggesting is that students be given an opportunity to move beyond the two-dimensional view of an object.

³Tucker, "Hardy Societies," Sec. 4, p. 16.

prepared to assist it in terms of manpower and ideas, in exchange for new teaching tools and an opportunity for a non-traditional educational experience for its students. At all times, reciprocity, *quid pro quo*, should be the rule.⁴ Genuine respect for the museum's preservation function will help foster museum staff interest in making the student "museum-experience" truly educational and not just an euphemism for captive labor.

III. MAKING USE OF THE RESOURCES OF THE LOCAL MUSEUM

"Nothing less than the whole of the past is needed to explain the present, and in this difficult task we cannot afford to neglect the unrecorded past."⁵

While we have been emphasizing collections, the museum and historical agencies should be regarded as resource centers for a large variety of material culture projects: architectural surveys, "living history" experiments such as "live-ins" in a restored building or group of buildings, cemetery transcriptions, craft demonstrations, archeological digs, restoration projects and oral history studies. What we are really talking about are projects and studies that take the student outside the classroom environment and the traditional dependence on words over things as historical reality.

A cooperative program between the college or university and museum is likely to be mutually rewarding, and therefore successful, if it includes at least three important characteristics. First, such a program should provide students with an opportunity for truly creative intellectual activity. The instructor should have specific goals, perhaps defined in terms of study projects, which are directly complementary to the student's broader program of American cultural studies. A course in early American technology, for example, would ideally be supplemented with an examination of pre-industrial craft technology as represented in museum collections. Outside the classroom, a student could serve as a museum intern responsible for an independent project—e.g., American technology and changing concepts of the "pastoral ideal." The museum could benefit from this arrangement by having the student install a provocative new exhibit or compile a more complete artifact catalogue. An example of such cooperation is Temple University's American Studies program which has newly instituted a cooperative agreement with about a dozen cultural agencies (including museums and historical societies) in the greater Philadelphia

⁴Judith Bingham, "Giving Your Interns a Piece of the Action," *Museum News*, Dec. 1973, p. 39.

⁵E. Estyn Evans, *Irish Folk Ways* (New York: Devin-Adair, 1957), p. xiv.

area. Quoting from the program bulletin: "Faculty advisers and personnel at most of the cooperating institutions will entertain any student project that utilizes the collection of the institution in a manner that has some benefit to the institution and at the same time increases the knowledge, awareness, and connoisseurship of the student."⁶

Secondly, a joint university-museum program should provide an opportunity for the museum to benefit from the availability of fresh ideas and extra hands. Some cooperative projects have failed because students were assigned by professors to "go work in the museum," and then assigned by the museum staff to "go work in the attic." A successful program should be carefully planned to make the most productive use of the time, energy and particular talents of everyone involved—students, teachers and museum personnel. A few students may be genuinely excited by the prospects of spending a semester in a musty basement reworking the museum's catalogue files—but very few. Students can certainly do their share of hammering together displays and printing labels; that, after all, is an essential part of any sort of museum activity. But their knowledge and perspective should also be directed into efforts to develop new educational programs, revitalize exhibit design or in other ways enhance the museum's overall effectiveness as a community, as well as an academic, resource. To ensure that adequate direction and follow-through occurs, there must be complete involvement of at least one key member of both faculty and the museum staff. Granted that the museum-university venture is planned to be mutually beneficial, joint supervision and cooperation is essential. The museum personnel should be actively enlisted in an orientation session involving basic museological philosophy and museum techniques (e.g., accessioning, cataloguing, artifact care, exhibition). Mutual recognition of different areas of expertise and exchange of information in planning the university-museum program will do much to diffuse any misunderstandings existing between the two "educational" institutions.

Finally, if a program of exchange between the museum and the college or university is to succeed, it must be recognized as educationally valid by both parties. This means that the school might wish to credit student involvement in the museum explicitly and not hide it under such transcript entries as "American History 352." The students' museum experience might be planned and recorded as an internship, an assistantship, or in any other terms which would define the value and credibility of the work. For its part, the museum should validate the program by meeting the school's basic

⁶"Resources and Suggested Projects at Cooperating Institutions" (Spring 1974), American Studies Program, Temple University. For information, contact Ms. Meredith Savery, 1930 N. Park Mall, 3rd Floor, Philadelphia, Pa. 19122.

standards for course credit. This means that museum professionals must assume their responsibilities as instructors with specialized knowledge to impart to students. Because small museums and universities have not often extended themselves toward mutual understanding, this step may require some accommodation on both sides, but, like the other necessary steps in developing a meaningful cooperative American Studies program involving the museum with the university, it can produce rewarding results.

In all of this students should participate in planning their individual uses of museum resources and the research and interpretation of those objects. They should be exposed to the nitty gritty of authentication and documentation and urged to help put together the bits and pieces of concrete evidence which make up so-called historical fact. In the process the students can become the vital link, the mediators, between the museum and the university. If they trace with their minds the progress of significant ideas, they should also have a chance to trace with their hands the evolution of the way of life affected by those ideas. In this fashion, the American past for them assumes a new vitality in the American present.

American Studies faculty and students alike share a concern for "What do I do with an American Studies major?" An area of great opportunity for a career in American Studies is museum education—that sector of museums presently undergoing the greatest growth and reappraisal. Program ideas within the museum are many, ranging from on-site "live-ins" (e.g., historic St. Augustine; Old Economy Village, Ambridge, Pennsylvania; Fort Point, San Francisco)⁷ to the development of "suitcase exhibits,"⁸ in which assemblies of objects are taken into the classroom. Museum education as a professional category is now an option open to those who do not wish to teach within the traditional classroom. Again, the number of examples are growing: the Geneva Historical Society in Geneva, New York, has begun a cooperative program with two local colleges, providing education majors with in-museum teaching experience.⁹ George Washington University now offers a M.A.T. in museum education, and the University of Pennsylvania's program in material culture includes a museum internship.¹⁰

⁷For further information, contact respective institutions. Also see article in the National Park Service's Environmental Living Program (ELP), "'Live-ins' Spread from West to East as Students Recreate History," *History News*, Mar. 1974, pp. 68-69.

⁸Contact the Community Museum Program for a bibliography of source material (c/o: Dr. John A. Hague, Dir. NASF, Box 1255, Stetson University, DeLand, Fla. 32720).

⁹For information, contact Ms. Barbara Force, Head of Education, Geneva Historical Society, Geneva, N.Y.

¹⁰For information, write Ms. Sue Robinson Hoth, Project Coordinator, M.A.T. in Museum Education, George Washington University, Washington, D.C.; and Dr. Anthony Garvan, Dept. of American Civilization, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pa.

IV. COMMUNITY MUSEUM PROGRAM: UNIVERSITY-MUSEUM PROJECTS

The Community Museum Program has conducted several workshops, ranging in length from one to two weeks, in which college students were engaged in the research and interpretation of artifacts. A workshop is certainly only one way to structure museum involvement on the part of students, but the information and experiences gained from these workshops can well be applied to other museum projects.

In the winter of 1973, the CMP conducted a two-week workshop at Kauffman Museum on the campus of Bethel College in North Newton, Kansas. It is housed in an antiquated gymnasium and suffers all the problems already described. However, it is also the repository for a remarkable collection relating to the lives of the Mennonite pioneers who came to Kansas in the 1870s. Early American technology, the frontier, Mennonite faith and religious experience, and the German-Russian heritage of most of the pioneers—all are richly represented in this collection. Represented but not interpreted.

The students began their first day in the workshop with an informal walk through the museum in which they would play the role of a prospective curator. As such, they were asked to impose some sort of order on the clutter of objects presented to them—to decide what story, or stories, those objects could tell. From there, each student chose an area of particular interest. Working under the constant supervision and advice of the museum curator and the CMP staff, students developed exhibits which reflected the significance of the objects they had chosen. Two of the women, interested in 19th century textile technology, converted what had been the coaches' office into a Textile Demonstration Center. The project actually took more than the two weeks of the workshop but the research and planning were all finished within that time. The final exhibit area includes a working loom, several spinning wheels, and rotating exhibits of quilts and coverlets which are borrowed from members of the immediate community. The women, both skilled in such crafts as spinning and weaving, give regularly-scheduled demonstrations to museum visitors. One of them, after having interviewed and photographed many quilters in the area, put together a slide presentation which she now carries to civic groups and clubs throughout the region.

Another student, a biology major, chose to attack one small area in the enormous taxidermy collection. His special interest is ecology and he decided to concentrate on animals that are becoming extinct. He created a sensitive exhibit successfully relating the American Indians' respect for all forms of life to the problems of 20th century technology—a technology that

has become so destructive of the Indian way of life. Still another student worked with the gun collection and brought to it a Mennonite interpretation, asking the question "Weapon or Tool?" Each of the students received three hours intersession course credit.

Although the students and one woman from the community were the official enrollees, the workshop attracted many visitors from both the campus and town. CMP consultants held a number of meetings with interested faculty members suggesting ways in which their particular courses could be related to the collections in the museum; these suggestions were incorporated in the final report.¹¹ Crucial to the success of these creative, educational and (in the case of the Textile Center) "service-oriented" exhibits were: the active participation of students in some project of interest to them; the fact that each received three hours intersession course credit; the cooperation of the museum curator, pressed as he is for time; and the support of many academicians who had not fully appreciated the value of the museum as a teaching-learning adjunct to the curriculum. The long-range impact of the workshop has been significant. Convinced of the importance of their collection, the college is now seeking ways to fund a variety of projects that will better utilize the collections and archives for the benefit of the college and the community.

The Community Museum Program planned and implemented another workshop, lasting five days, at the Bucks County Historical Society's Mercer Museum in Doylestown, Pennsylvania. The participants were students from Rider College (Trenton, New Jersey) who were enrolled in an intersession course, as well as volunteers and staff of the Mercer Museum. Unlike the Bethel College Museum, the Mercer's collection is not bounded by community limits, but rather has tens of thousands of primarily craft-related artifacts from New England, the South and foreign countries such as China, as well as from the "German" counties of Pennsylvania. It was the intention of the museum's founder, builder and designer, Henry Chapman Mercer, that his reinforced-concrete castle should house an encyclopedic collection of what he called "Tools of the Nation Maker." Mercer had little interest in what museum people today term "interpretation," but rather grouped his artifacts by subject category in rooms about a four-story court. He described the interior of his museum thusly: "You will find the smaller objects guarded from visitors' hands and the threat of fire, located in fire-proofed glazed alcoves fronting four tiers of galleries opening on a high court, while many of the larger things [including a Conestoga wagon] hang over the balconies of the galleries themselves, in full sight from many points

¹¹This and other pertinent CMP reports may be requested from the director.

of view and so as to occupy no floor space."¹² Despite the matchless collection of pre-industrial technology left by Mercer, the museum staff faces serious spatial and interpretative problems, as well as an inadequate and incomplete catalogue. Nevertheless, they unlocked one of the "fire-proofed glazed alcoves," allowing students to learn first-hand how objects could be used to transmit ideas. They had the opportunity to discover the function of craft implements, as well as to understand the ideas and values of the maker and user.

The students who were enrolled in the three-credit museum course (the workshop portion conducted by the CMP) had a wide spectrum of academic backgrounds: accounting, sociology, political science and history. Mornings of the workshop consisted of content presentations given by specialists in several disciplines (i.e., historic-site archaeology, history of technology, social history and folklife) who had been brought in as consultants by the CMP. The afternoons were free for student-participants to complete individually-directed projects. Each student selected five artifacts which bore some relationship to each other (e.g., function, fabrication, material composition) and developed this relationship into a story line for an exhibit.

Using the excellent research library of the Bucks County Historical Society housed within the Mercer Museum, students identified and documented their "collection" of five artifacts. Building on catalogue information, "exhibit scripts" were prepared and used by participants to explain their exhibit concepts. The final projects were presented to a group including the Mercer Museum staff, museum volunteers, CMP consultants and the supervising faculty member from Rider College. One such script, "Tableware and Table Manners," linked forgotten rules of eating etiquette with a "collection": cup, spoon, porringer, salt cup and trencher. Resourcefulness and creativity were evident in another student project, "Early American Pie Making." This student interpreted his artifacts (liquid measure bowl, spoon, rolling pin, patent cherry stoner and pie crimper) both in light of historical research and as part of a continuum within the American kitchen. Supporting his exhibit script was the student's sequential photo documentation of the pie-making process as practiced by his mother. Other themes were developed around a process (food preservation), a craftsman (white cooper), or material (tin). Some students proposed installing an "environmental" exhibit (fireplace gear arranged in front of a fireplace hearth); while others suggested that their objects be incorporated

¹²Henry Chapman Mercer, "Presentation Address of Dr. Henry C. Mercer," *A Collection of Papers Read Before the Bucks County Historical Society*, Vol. 4, 1917, p. 630.

within a "suitcase exhibit," a box of small, durable artifacts to be lent to a school.

The staff profited from an influx of fresh ideas, and the students, a potential body of museum visitors, now look at the educational importance of material culture with new respect. For a week at least, the great potential of the Mercer collection of early American technology became dramatically evident. The physical problems confronted by the museum staff will not be so easily solved, but the workshop provoked interest and re-evaluation among those entrusted with the care and interpretation of Henry Mercer's collection. The format and objectives of the Mercer Museum workshop will not be applicable to every situation, but the success of this collaboration, as well as that of the Bethel College Museum, points out how well students can enable museum and university to work together.

V. THE MUSEUM AND THE UNIVERSITY: A BIBLIOGRAPHY

All responsible artifact research, like the book and document variety, begins with an exhaustive bibliography listing all sources that have touched on some facet of what an object category represents. The first sources to be consulted should be the in-museum records, that is, the artifact catalogue. Quite simply, this generally consists of an accession card which will usually include a record of acquisition date, donor/vendor and object description. This card will usually be filed chronologically. Depending upon the degree of museum sophistication, there may also be a cross-indexing system reflecting areas such as architecture, ceramics, religion, etc. Classification systems often depend on the idiosyncrasies of the curator or registrar, or, at best, attempt to follow one of the many retrieval systems used throughout the country. Whatever the case, use of the artifact catalogue can be an exasperating experience. Useful introductions to museum registration and cataloguing can be found in Irma Wilkinson and Dorothy M. Dudley's *Museum Registration Methods* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution and AAM, 1968) and in Technical Leaflets (numbers 11, 36, 57, 58) produced by the American Association for State and Local History (1315 Eighth Ave. South, Nashville, Tennessee).

There are a number of general bibliographies available to the student of material culture. Those listed below are among the first which should be consulted when doing artifact research, to be supplemented later by indexes and specialized readings.

Ferguson, Eugene S. *Bibliography of the History of Technology*. Cambridge: The Society for the History of Technology and the M.I.T. Press, 1968.

- Glassie, Henry. "Bibliography," in *Pattern in the Material Folk Culture of the Eastern United States*. Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1968.
- Hindle, Brooke. "A Bibliography of Early American Technology," in *Technology in Early America*. Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1966.
- Rath, Frederick L. and Merrillyn Rogers O'Connell. *Guide to Historic Preservation, Historical Agencies, and Museum Practices: A Selective Bibliography*. Cooperstown, N.Y.: New York State Historical Association, 1970.
The *Guide* is an indispensable compendium of museum and preservation organizations, of books on museological theory and practice, as well as sources on documentation methods and a material culture bibliography.
- Whitehill, Walter Muir. *The Arts in Early American History*. With a bibliography by Wendell D. and Jane N. Garrett. Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1965.
- Wildhaber, Robert. *A Bibliographical Introduction to American Folklife*. Reprinted from *New York Folklore Quarterly*, December 1965.

The person who would seek to interpret material culture may well have to reconstruct context, determine provenance and age, as well as fathom function. This is rigorous detective work involving nothing less than a multidisciplinary approach. Creativity and sound scholarship mark the diverse studies listed below, all of which treat the relationship of objects to ideas.

- Burchard, John and Albert Bush-Brown. *The Architecture of America: A Social and Cultural History*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1961.
- Condit, Carl. *American Building*. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1968.
- Evans, E. Estyn. *Irish Folk Ways*. New York: Devin-Adair, 1957.
- Fleming, E. McClung, "Artifact Study: A Proposed Model," *Winterthur Portfolio*, 1974.
- _____. "Early American Decorative Arts as Social Documents," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 44 (Sept. 1958), 276-84.
- Giedion, Siegfried. *Mechanization Takes Command*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1948.
- _____. *Space, Time and Architecture: The Growth of a New Tradition*. (rev.) Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1967.
- Glassie, Henry. *Pattern in the Material Folk Culture of the Eastern United States*. Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1968.
- Gowans, Alan. *Images of American Living: Four Centuries of Architecture and Furniture as Cultural Expression*. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1964.
- Hindle, Brooke. *Technology in Early America*. Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1966.

Kouwenhoven, John A. *The Arts in Modern American Civilization*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1948.

———. "American Studies: Words or Things," *American Studies in Transition*, Marshall Fishwick, ed. Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1964.

———. *The Columbia Historical Portrait of New York: An Essay in Graphic History*. New York: Harper & Row, 1972.

Lesy, Michael. *Wisconsin Death Trip*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1973.

Ludwig, Allan I. *Graven Images: New England Stonecarving and Its Symbols, 1650-1815*. Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan Univ. Press, 1966.

Marx, Leo. *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America*. London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1964.

Morse, John D., ed. *Country Cabinetwork and Simple City Furniture*. Charlottesville: The Univ. Press of Virginia, 1970.

Noel-Hume, Ivor. *Here Lies Virginia: An Archeologist's View of Colonial Life and History*. New York: Alfred Knopf, 1963.

Vogel, Donald and Margaret. *Aunt Clara: The Paintings of Clara McDonald Williamson*. Austin: Univ. of Texas Press for the Amon Carter Museum of Western Art, 1966.

Washburn, Wilcomb E. "Manuscripts and Manufacts," *American Archivist*, 27, No. 2 (Apr. 1964), 245-50.

The museum is only the starting point for material culture research. Local history projects (e.g. architectural surveys, oral history, cemetery transcribing, genealogical research) can help provide the essential background, or context, for objects.

American Association for State and Local History. *Technical Leaflet Series*. Nashville: American Association for State and Local History.

Broad series of technical bulletins concerning basics of museum methods and exhibits, historical society programs, object care and local history research. How-to-do-it approach.

America the Beautiful Fund. *Old Glory: A Pictorial Report on the Grass Roots History Movement and The First Hometown History Primer*. New York: Warner Paperback Library, 1973.

A virtual "Sears, Roebuck" catalogue of grass roots history projects conducted on a shoestring. (Many of the programs undertaken by historical societies and small community museums are centered outside of a building and its collection.) Also contains a valuable compendium of source books and agencies concerned with many aspects of local history.

Baum, Willa K. *Oral History for the Local Historical Society*. Nashville: AASLH, 1971.

Contains information on how to set up an oral history program, interviewing techniques and recording equipment.

Collier, John Jr. *Visual Anthropology: Photography as a Research Method*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1967.

Written by an anthropologist, helpful in suggesting a methodology and philosophy for doing photographic fieldwork.

- Goldstein, Kenneth S. *A Guide for Field Workers In Folklore*. Hatboro, Pa.: Folklore Associates, Inc., 1964.
Standard guide for collecting folklore—i.e., oral traditions.
- Lord, Clifford L. *Teaching History with Community Resources*. New York: Teachers College Press, 1967.
Suggests how local history can be brought into public school curricula. Part of "Localized History Series."
- McKee, Harley J. *Recording Historic Buildings*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1970.
- Montell, W. Lynwood. *Saga of Coe Ridge: A Study in Oral History*. New York: Harper & Row, 1972.
- New York State Board for Historic Preservation. *Historic Resources Survey Manual*. Albany: State Board for Historic Preservation, 1972.
Compiled specifically for New York State, it is also an excellent guide for doing rudimentary architectural surveys elsewhere. Much more basic than McKee.
- Parker, Donald Dean (rev. and ed. by Bertha E. Josephson). *Local History: How to Gather It, Write It, and Publish It*. New York: Social Science Research Council, 1944.
Emphasis on written records.

Finally, there are a few basic museum technique books that should be familiar to anyone wishing to use the collections of a museum. Although previously mentioned, the two professional museum organizations need to be identified here:

The American Association of Museums, 2233 Wisconsin Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20007, publishes *Museum News* which discusses issues and current trends in the museum world, and a useful bulletin: *Washington Report*.

The American Association for State and Local History, 1315 Eighth Avenue South, Nashville, Tennessee, publishes *History News*, a practical magazine oriented primarily toward the historical museum and agency. It usually includes one of the invaluable Technical Leaflets which offer practical how-to advice for museum concerns.

Dudley, Dorothy and Irma Bezold. *Museum Registration Methods*. Washington, D.C.: AAM, 1968.

Useful material on cataloguing procedures, information retrieval in museums and object care.

Guldbeck, Per E. *The Care of Historical Collections*. Nashville: AASLH, 1972.

Indispensable "conservation handbook for the nonspecialist." Also contains a chapter on artifact documentation.

Guthe, Carl E. *So You Want a Good Museum—A Guide to the Management of Small Museums*. Washington, D.C.: AAM, 1967.

Description of how most small museums are supposed to work.

Neal, Arminta. *Help! For the Small Museum: Handbook of Exhibit Ideas and Methods*. Boulder, Colo.: Pruett Press, 1969.

Nuts-and-bolts (literally) approach to exhibit design and construction.